

HOTTEST



COLDEST



HIGHEST



DEEPEST



BY STEVE JENKINS

Genre

Expository nonfiction gives information about the real world. Look for numbers and diagrams that help you understand the facts.

How does the environment where you live compare to these extreme locations?

If you could visit any spot on Earth, where would you go? What if you wanted to see some of the most amazing natural wonders in the world?

There are deserts that haven't seen rain for hundreds of years and jungles where it pours almost every day. There are places so cold that even in the summer it's below freezing and spots where it's often hot enough to cook an egg on the ground. There are mountains many miles high and ocean trenches that are even deeper. You can find rivers thousands of miles long and waterfalls thousands of feet high.

Where are the very hottest and coldest, windiest and snowiest, highest and deepest places on Earth? Travel the world and visit the planet's record holders.

U.S. **2,750 miles wide**



Nile **4,145 miles**

Amazon River **4,007 miles**

Chiang Jiang **3,964 miles**

Mississippi-Missouri **3,710 miles**

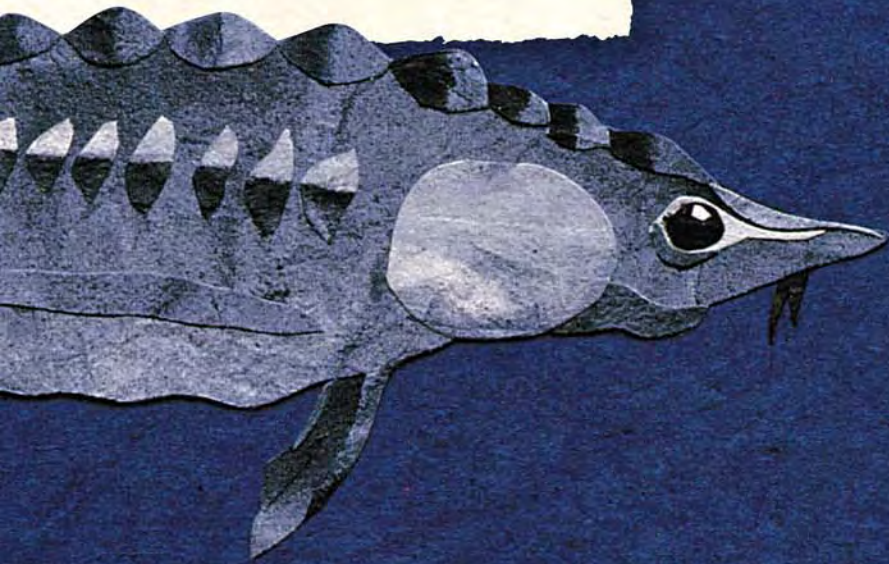
The Nile, in Africa, is the **longest** river in the world. It is 4,145 miles long.

The Amazon River, in South America, is not as long—4,007 miles—but it is considered mightier because it carries half of all the river water in the world. The Chiang Jiang (Yangtze), in Asia (3,964 miles), and the Mississippi-Missouri, in the United States (3,710 miles), are the world's third and fourth longest rivers.



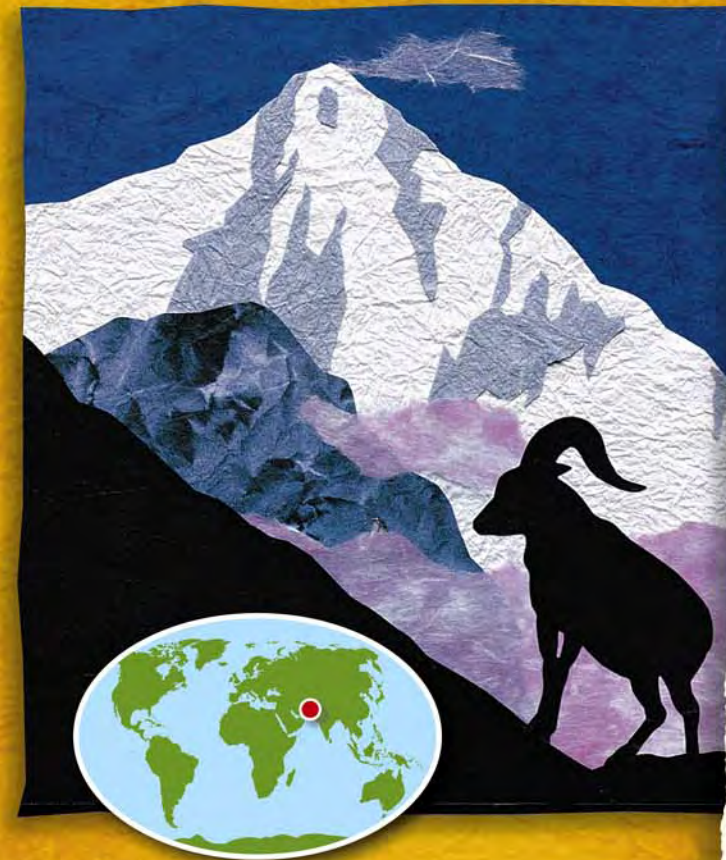
Lake Baikal, in Russia, is the world's **oldest** and **deepest** lake. The lake was formed about 25 million years ago. In one spot it is 5,134 feet deep.

The largest freshwater lake in the world is Lake Superior, one of the Great Lakes in North America (31,700 square miles), but Lake Baikal (5,500 square miles) contains more water than any other lake on Earth—more than all five Great Lakes combined.



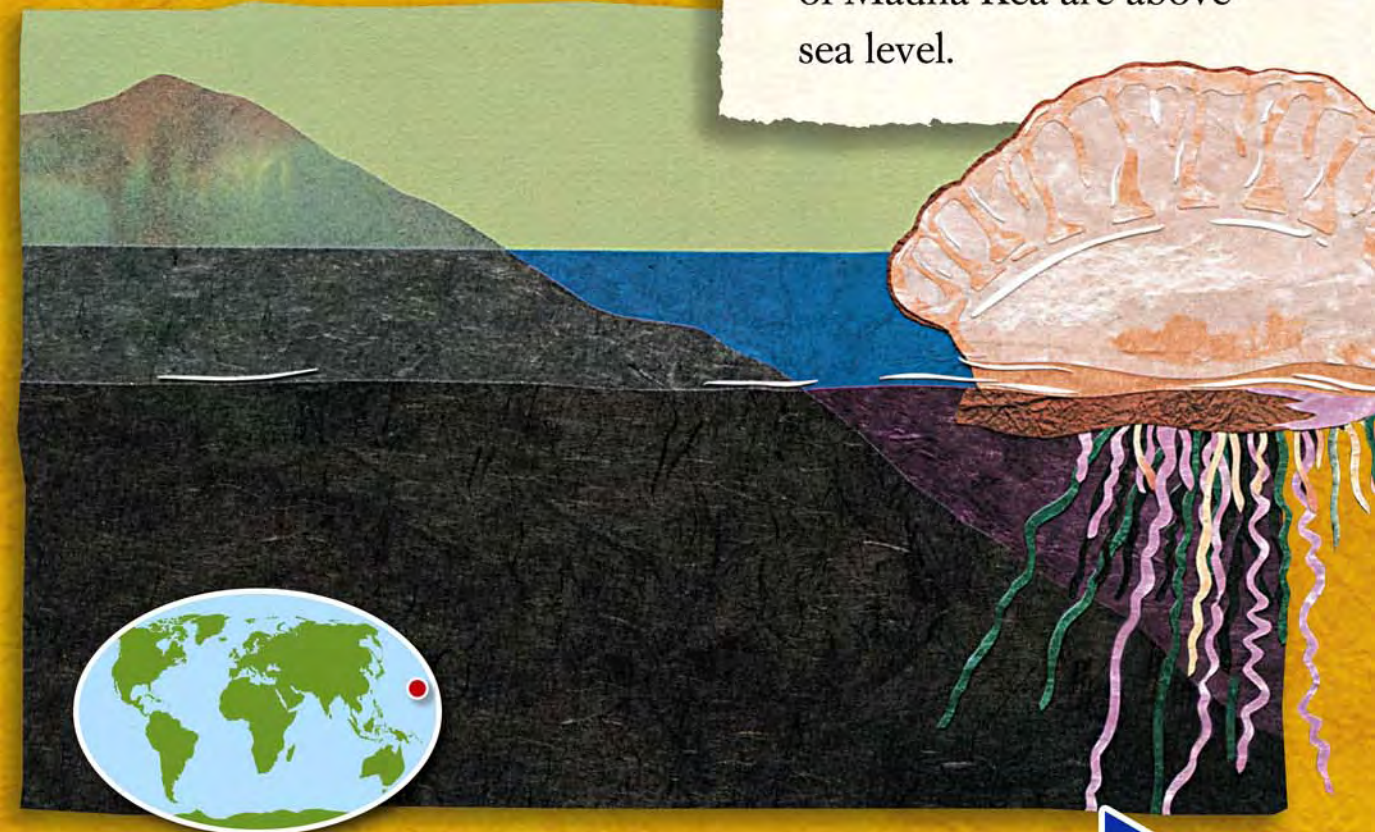
Lake Baikal
5,134 ft.

Empire State
Building
1,250 ft.



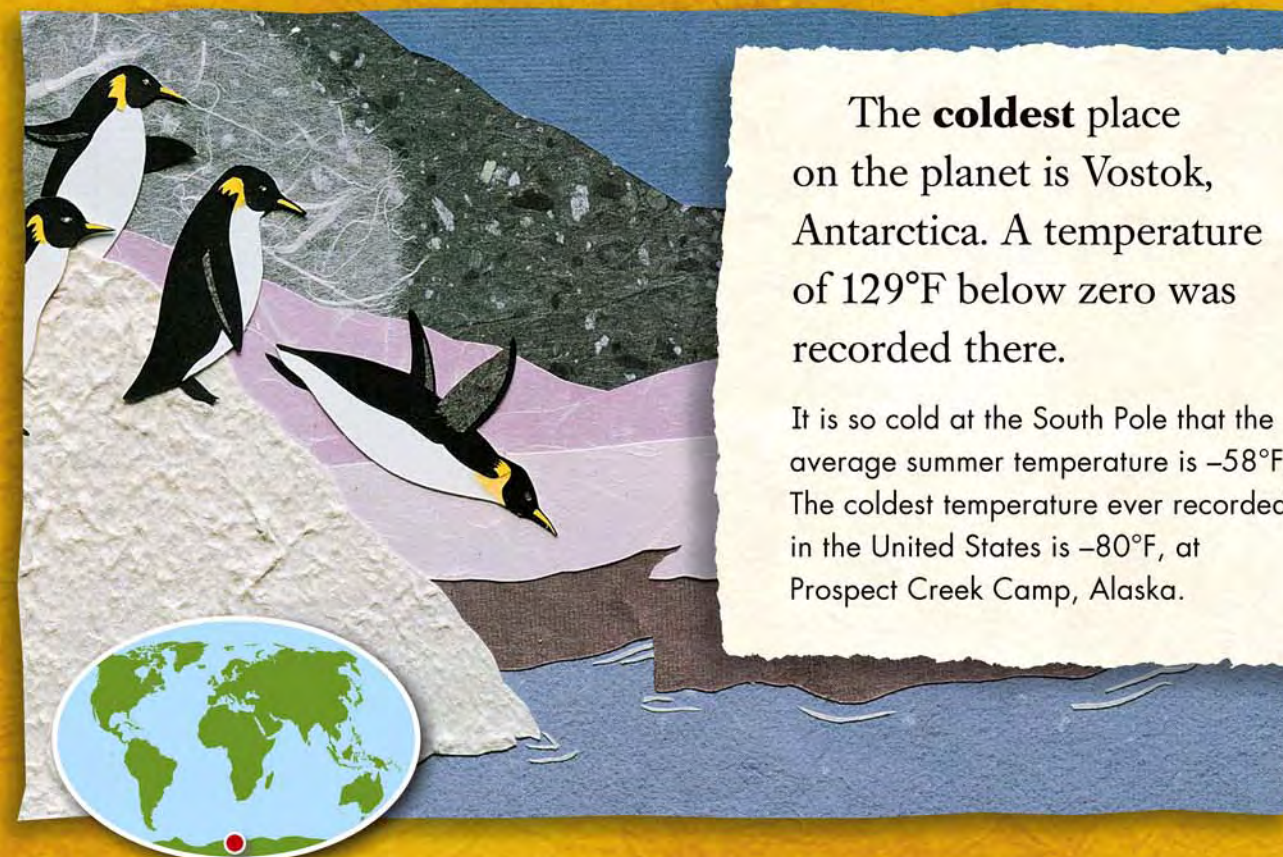
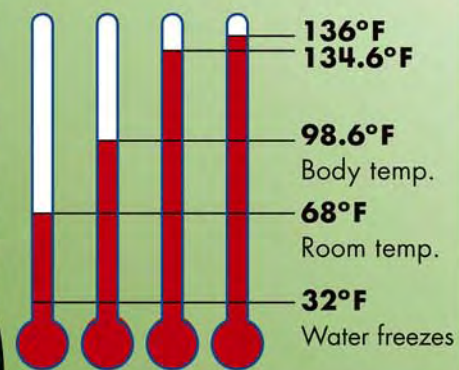
Mount Everest is the **highest** mountain in the world. Its peak is 29,028 feet above sea level.

Mount Everest is considered the **highest** mountain—above sea level—in the world, but it's not really the **tallest**. Measured from its base on the floor of the ocean, Mauna Kea, in Hawaii, is 33,476 feet tall. Only the top 13,796 feet of Mauna Kea are above sea level.



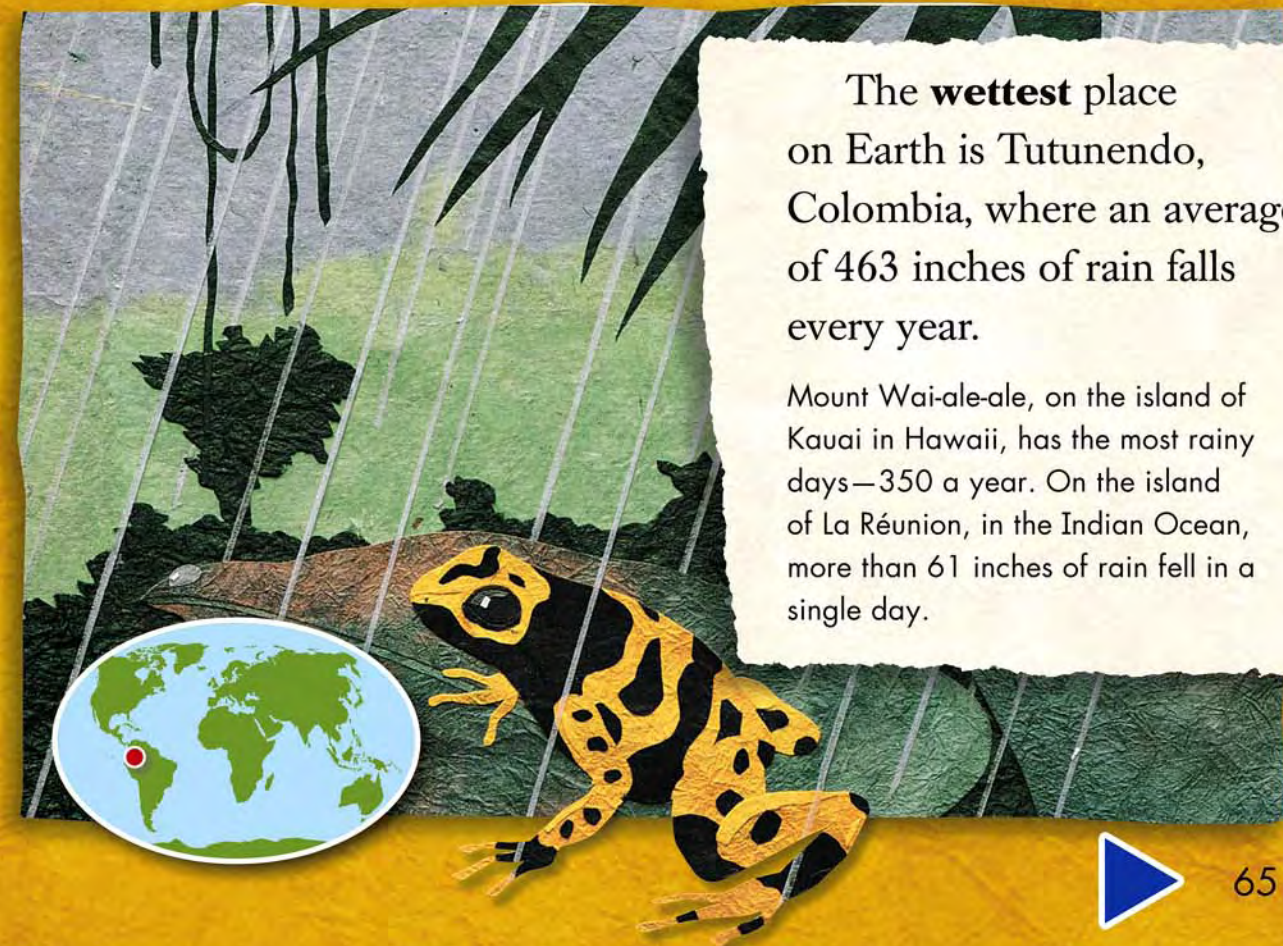
The **hottest** spot on the planet is Al Aziziyah, Libya, in the Sahara, where a temperature of over 136°F has been recorded.

The hottest temperature ever recorded in the United States is 134.6°F , in Death Valley, California.



The **coldest** place on the planet is Vostok, Antarctica. A temperature of 129°F below zero was recorded there.

It is so cold at the South Pole that the average summer temperature is -58°F . The coldest temperature ever recorded in the United States is -80°F , at Prospect Creek Camp, Alaska.

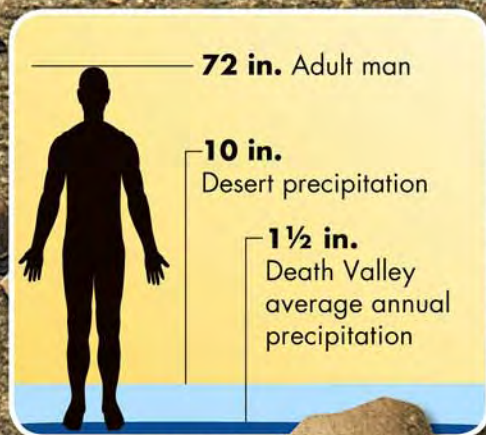


The **wettest** place on Earth is Tutunendo, Colombia, where an average of 463 inches of rain falls every year.

Mount Wai-ale-ale, on the island of Kauai in Hawaii, has the most rainy days—350 a year. On the island of La Réunion, in the Indian Ocean, more than 61 inches of rain fell in a single day.

The **driest** place is the Atacama Desert, in Chile, where no rain has fallen for the last 400 years.

Any place that receives less than 10 inches of precipitation a year is considered a desert. The driest place in the United States is Death Valley, California, where only about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches of rain fall every year.



The **windiest** spot on Earth is atop Mount Washington, in New Hampshire. A wind speed of 231 miles per hour has been recorded there.

It is also very windy near the tops of the world's highest mountains, the Himalayas. Many of these peaks are tall enough to reach the jet stream, a narrow, strong air current that is found above 28,000 feet.



The world's **highest** waterfall is Angel Falls, in Venezuela. It is 3,212 feet high.

Angel Falls is more than seventeen times higher than Niagara Falls (180 feet), in New York State. Victoria Falls, in Zimbabwe, Africa, carries more water than any other waterfall. It is 355 feet high.



The **deepest** spot in the ocean is the Marianas Trench, in the Philippines. It is 36,202 feet deep.

The average depth of the world's oceans is about 3 miles, or 16,000 feet. The lowest spot on dry land is the shore of the Dead Sea, 1,100 feet below sea level.



The world's **most active** volcano is Sangay, in Ecuador. Since 1937 it has erupted once every 24 hours on average. It once erupted more than 400 times in a single day.

Other very active volcanoes include Colima, in Mexico (it has erupted regularly since 1560); Aso, in Japan (erupting since 533); and Mount Etna, in Italy (erupting regularly since 1500 B.C.).



The **most extreme tides** occur in the Bay of Fundy, in Nova Scotia, Canada. There the water level rises and falls more than 50 feet every 6 hours.

The tide here comes in so fast that it can overtake a person trying to outrun it.



100 ft.

Mt. Rainier record
1-year snowfall

6 ft.

Adult man

3 ft.

Typical annual
New York City
snowfall



The **snowiest** place on Earth is Mount Rainier, in Washington State. One year, more than 1,200 inches of snow fell there.

Mount Rainier is covered in snow the whole year. Some of the snow has formed glaciers, masses of ice that slowly move down the mountain under their own weight.

